CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2025

Happy Fall Beloveds!

When September comes, I start to think about apples. Maybe it's the idea of bringing the teacher an apple on the first day of school. I can see the image clearly in my head. The teacher's desk with the blackboard behind it. On the blackboard we see in very neat chalk print the first three letters of the alphabet in upper and lower case. In the foreground the top of the teacher's desk is neatly arranged. There's a stack of textbooks - their subjects neatly labeled on the spines. Next to them is a cup with needle-sharp bright yellow pencils. Everything is bright primary colors; especially that big round bright red apple shining on the edge of the desk.

Or maybe my thoughts are guided toward apples because I share a birthday (September 26 if you're wondering) with the late, great John Chapman, who you are probably more familiar with as Johnny Appleseed. He was far more than the folk hero we may think of now.

I am recalling now an article I read years ago about a theory of education that would assign students from the beginning of their school lives an object that would be their core (get it …core!?) through high school. The example given in the article was apples. So a student would have apples as their lens into all of the various subjects they would encounter. Reading and literature would be taught through stories in which apples figure prominently. In science, they would be taught through experiments and study of apples.

So, I invite you during this back-to-school month to consider some of your core values, ideas, that accompany and guide you through your lives. What are the principles that you learned from your Christian traditions that you hold particularly close. Not only what are they - but how deeply do you hold them. Do you know how they sprouted? Do you know how your foremothers and forefathers built their foundations upon them? I am praying your exploration is fruitful (get it?).

Blessings, Pastor Rob

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COMING SOON

Sept 14	Bagged Lunches
Sept 20	Sound Bath
Sept 21	Café Bethany
Oct 3	Ring Out Danger Labyrinth Service

PHOTO GALLERY

A PEEK AT RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BETHANY COMMUNITY!

On August 26, Pastor Rob Herrmann and Cathy Personius participated at the Interfaith Prayer Vigil outside of the San Francisco ICE Field Office.

The Bethany Community offered congratulations and blessings to Liam O'Connor as he heads off to college at USC and to Carmela Saguar also heading off to college at Sarah Lawrence. Pastor Rob provided them with books in which church members added good wishes.

On September 9th, Pastor Rob went to the Ecumenical House at San Francisco State to help give out sandwiches and coffee to students. Pastor Rob has become a new member of the Board of the San Francisco State campus ministry at the Ecumenical House.

BUDGET UPDATE

by Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Through August, we received $77,131 in donations and $117,718 in rental income for a total of $194,849. Donations for the year are running behind budget. Our expenses through August were $176,502. However, we have only made $1,153 in repairs versus the annual repair budget of $25,640. We have also increased our Reserves by $1,500.

Also included below is giving information. The distribution of pledges is shown below. Overall, our total average pledge amount is $5,932 per person. Total donations through August have been $77,131 across 46 people (for both pledgers and non-pledging donors) which results in an average gift of $1,677 person.

Our available cash on August 31st is $136,114.

Summary of Donations

Expected Giving for 2025 ==> $137,270

Actual Giving thru 8/31/25 ==> $77,131

Left to Go ==>$60,139

Actual vs. Budget	**Actuals thru 8/31/25**	**Budget for 2025**	**Actual vs. Budget**
Donations	$ 77,131	$ 137,270	$ (60,139)
Rent	117,718	169,797	(52,079)
Total Income	194,849	307,067	(112,218)
Staff & Programs	86,601	139,417	(52,816)
Tithe	12,000	30,707	(18,707)
Building Costs	76,748	117,774	(41,026)
Building Repairs	1,153	25,640	(24,487)
Total Operating Costs	176,502	313,538	(137,036)
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Increase to Reserves	(1,500)	(6,000)	4,500
Net Result	**$ 16,847**	**$ (12,471)**	**$ 29,318**

Cash Balances at 8/31/25	
Operating Cash	$ 136,114
Trustee Cash Reserves	$ 41,706
Memorials	$ 11,734

Distribution of Pledges			
Gift Amount	Number of Households	Pledge Amount	%
$1 to $2,500	9	$ 12,744	11%
$2,501 to $6,000	4	$ 18,400	16%
$6,001 to $9,999	3	$ 23,500	20%
$10,000 & Above	4	$ 64,000	54%
Total	20	$ 118,644	100%
Average/person		$ 5,932	

YTD Donations Received		
YTD pledges received	$ 66,721	87%
YTD other donations	$ 10,410	13%
Total donations	$ 77,131	100%
Total number of givers	46	
Average gift/giver	$ 1,677	

Upcoming Café Bethany

by Cathy Personius

Bethany's next Cafe Bethany, on Sept. 21, will feature Matt Alexander from Faith in Action's San Francisco chapter speaking about their work in supporting migrant families. Come learn about the experiences of families who chose SF as their destination because they heard it was a sanctuary city. Hear how they have organized to advocate for improved city services, including participating in a recent campaign to stop evictions from family shelters and add $30 million in housing subsidies to the city budget. They will also bring information on how immigration enforcement activities are affecting immigrant families and what we can do to support the immigrant community.

Faith in Action's goal is to develop leadership among people impacted by poverty and oppression. We are invited to participate with other faith and community organizations in supporting the work of their leaders.

After our Cafe Bethany with Faith in Action, you are invited to participate in a study, "Called to Journey, Called to Welcome", prepared by the Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist church. This study looks at various biblical passages on immigration to develop a theological understanding of the role of immigrants in a just society along with case studies of how immigration policies affect people in the US currently and discussion of how the church might respond. The study will be conducted over 5-6 weeks by Zoom at a time determined by the participants. If you are interested in the study, contact Cathy Personius at **cathy.personius@gmail.com**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bagged Lunches, Sunday, Sept. 14th @Noon:
We will continue with our sack lunch ministry with SF Night Ministry. Six times a year we create 125 sack lunches for our unhoused neighbors in San Francisco.

Sound Bath, Saturday, Sept. 20th @10 am:
Join us for another Sound Bath presented by Urban Practitioner, Laneka Leatutufu.

(cont'd on next page)

UPCOMING EVENTS

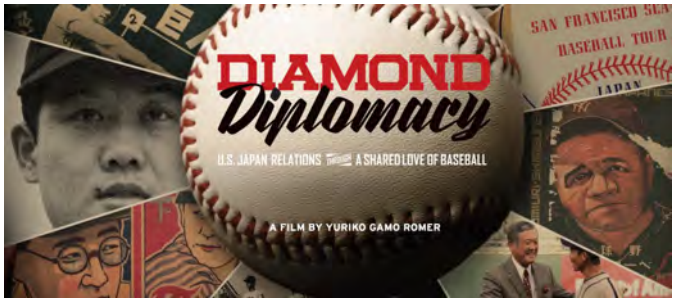
(cont'd from previous page)

Oct. 3rd @ 9:30 am, every 1st Friday of the month, we ring our bells in solidarity with ***Ring Out Danger: People of Faith Opposed to Gun Violence*** (**https://ringoutdanger.org**). Please join us, in front of Bethany, no ringing experience is required.

Join us for a service of music and movement, Friday, Oct. 3rd at 7 pm.

Each first Friday of the even numbered months will be an evening of chants and contemplative music inspired by the world's spiritual traditions. You are invited to explore the deeply centering tradition of walking the labyrinth, a journey inward and then back out. The service is very casual and is designed to be whatever you make of it. We will play music for about an hour.

Diamond Diplomacy, Oct 2-12
www.diamonddiplomacy.com
Premiering at the Mill Valley Film Festival:
www.mvff.com
Explores the long & complex relationship between the U.S. & Japan through the shared love of baseball, revealing a moving diplomatic history that spans generations. The film features a cross-cultural lineup of baseball legends, including Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Ichiro Suzuki (newly inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame this summer), and Shohei Ohtani, and makes a powerful case for sports as a conduit for international healing, connection, and resilience.
Thanks! Yuriko Romer (Director/Producer)



World premiering at the Mill Valley Film Festival Friday October 3 at 3:30pm and Sunday October 5 at 12:30 pm. General ticket sales begin September 18th.

Bible Study

Wednesdays 3-4pm on zoom. Join to discuss the scripture for the coming Sunday. All are welcome. Email Marilyn for more info mherand@sbcglobal.net

Small Groups – Sign-up at bethanysf.org

Group options: -2nd Saturdays each month @ 8:30am -2nd Wednesdays each month @ 7pm

community celebration board

Happy Birthday to Adela! Jeannette & Adela celebrated her 20th birthday on September 2nd in Copenhagen where she is studying this semester. Their time together was a blessing and getting to see a bit of her life overseas was a real joy! That's Kronborg Castle in the background.

CONTACT US

If you have articles, photos or announcements that you would like to share, please contact us!

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Find us online at **www.bethanysf.org**
FB **@bethanyumcsf** and IG **@bethany_umc_sf**

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2: Adela Keleman
3: Jerry Winniczek
11: Maranda Personius
20: Joel Creager
22: Alicia Saradpon
26: Pastor Rob Herrmann